



PRESS RELEASE

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Vermont Arts Council and The Vermont Community Foundation Partner on Statewide COVID-19 Arts Recovery Fund

Today, the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Community Foundation announce the creation of an Arts Recovery Fund to respond to the devastating and rapidly evolving impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Vermont's arts and culture sector.

The Arts Recovery Fund has two goals: to deliver fast-tracked support to Vermont's struggling arts and culture sector and to provide a central place to coordinate philanthropic giving. Direct grants will be available to support both individual artists and cultural organizations that are experiencing financial distress due to the spread of the novel coronavirus across Vermont. For donors, the Arts Recovery Fund is an opportunity to join a coordinated effort to facilitate the recovery of Vermont's creative sector. Donations are now being accepted on the Community Foundation's website at vermontcf.org/ArtsRecovery.

Arts and culture are vital anchors for many of Vermont's communities, providing more than 40,000 creative-sector jobs and sustaining vibrant downtowns that are critical to the state's economy and shared community life.

Vermont's museums, galleries, and performing arts venues are already reporting staggering losses from canceled concerts, festivals, theatrical performances, and other events due to the pandemic. We know Vermont communities will be feeling the effects for many months to come. The Arts Recovery Fund will strengthen the capacity of Vermont's arts and culture sector to survive the immediate economic impact and to respond creatively and strategically in the months ahead.

Grants are designed to be flexible and will allow the Arts Council and the Community Foundation to direct resources where the needs are greatest. For now, funds will be focused on meeting immediate needs, as follows:

- For individual artists: The Fund offers grants to cover income losses due to lost jobs, canceled gigs, exhibits, or workshops.

- For nonprofit arts and culture organizations: The Fund provides unrestricted operating support to mitigate the economic impact of workplace closures, event cancellations, and other disruptions of critical revenue.

Future rounds of funding may also support creative responses to the pandemic, such as online arts experiences, virtual gallery tours, concerts, etc.; planning and implementation of re-opening and re-scheduling canceled events; and arts events and initiatives that facilitate community recovery.

“We need the arts now more than ever, to help us support one another with creativity and compassion,” said Vermont Arts Council Executive Director Karen Mittelman. “We can’t afford to ignore the devastating losses in the arts sector today, or many of our arts organizations won’t be there in a few months, when communities will need to come together again to restore and move forward.”

“We are in the midst of a watershed moment for Vermont communities, and we are excited that this collaboration will provide much-needed support to the arts community throughout our state,” said Vermont Community Foundation President & CEO Dan Smith. “Theaters, concert halls, and museums are exactly the type of places where people come to heal after hard times, which is why it’s important to preserve the arts now and in the future.”

The Arts Recovery Fund launches a new partnership between the Arts Council and the Community Foundation. In support of this new endeavor, the Community Foundation is making a grant of up to \$50,000 from the Vermont Arts Endowment to the Arts Council. In addition to supporting the Council’s general grantmaking, these funds will be prioritized to support artists and arts organizations in their creative strategies to keep the arts alive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Details about the application process will be available in May. Artists and organizations interested in applying should contact Amy Cunningham at acunningham@vermontartscouncil.org.

About the Vermont Arts Council

The Vermont Arts Council envisions a Vermont where all people have access to the arts and creativity in their lives, education, and communities. Engagement with the arts transforms individuals, connects us more deeply to each other, energizes the economy, and sustains the vibrant cultural landscape that makes Vermont a great place to live. Since 1965, the Council has been the state's primary provider of funding, advocacy, and information for the arts in Vermont. Learn more at www.vermontartscouncil.org

About the Vermont Community Foundation

The Vermont Community Foundation inspires giving and brings people and resources together to make a difference in Vermont. A family of hundreds of funds and foundations, we provide the advice, investment vehicles, and back-office expertise that make it easy for the people who care about Vermont to find and fund the causes they love.

The heart of the Community Foundation’s work is closing the opportunity gap—the divide that leaves too many Vermonters struggling to get ahead, no matter how hard they work. We are aligning our time, energy, and discretionary resources on efforts that provide access to early care and learning, pathways

to college and career training, support for youth and families, and community and economic vitality. We envision Vermont at its best—where everyone has the opportunity to build a bright, secure future. Visit vermontcf.org or call 802-388-3355 for more information.

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